

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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TAGS: EAGR, EEC, ETRD

SUBJECT: EC COMMISSION VIEWS ON U.S. GRAPE VARIETIES

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 00665, (B) STATE 004907, (C) 75 A-6511

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: COMMISSION OFFICIALS GAVE MISSION OFFICER THEIR COMMENTS ON THE LIST OF U.S. GRAPE VARIETIES WE SUBMITTED LAST NOVEMBER (REF C). DR. REICHARDT WILL GIVE US SUGGESTED SYNONYMS THE U.S. COULD CONSIDER TO REPLACE THOSE U.S. VARIETIES WHICH REFER TO EC GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS. THE COMMISSION HOPES TO ISSUE ITS FIRST LIST OF APPROVED VARIETIES IN THREE WEEKS. WE RECOMMEND SUGGESTING MARCH DATES FOR CONSULTATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. COMMISSION OFFICIAL WILLIAM TULLY (D.G.VI) CALLED IN MISSION OFFICER ON FEBRUARY 5, TO DISCUSS U.S. LIST OF GRAPE VARIETIES SUBMITTED LAST NOVEMBER. DR. REICHARDT (D.G. VI), MME. DE PASCALE (D.G. VI), AND MR. GANGEMI (D.G.I) WERE ALSO PRESENT AT THE MEETING. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT AT OUR LAST MEETING WITH COMMISSION OFFICIALS ON WINE (REF A), THEY INDICATED THAT

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THEY HAD NO PROBLEM WITH U.S. GEOGRAPHICAL APPELLATIONS,

HOWEVER, THE SAME MIGHT NOT BE TRUE FOR CERTAIN U.S. GRAPE VARIETIES. WITHIN THREE WEEKS THE COMMISSION IS EXPECTED TO FINALIZE THROUGH ITS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PROCEDURE, THE IMPLEMENTING REGULATION ON LABELLING WHICH WILL APPROVE THE USE OF ALL U.S. GRAPE VARIETIES WE SPECIFIED EXCEPT THE FOLLOWING:

PINEAU DE LA LOIRE PINOT ST. GEORGE MOSCATO DI CANELLI
FRANKEN RIESLING PINTO PERNAND MUSCAT BORDELAISE
FRENCH COLOMBARD SAINT EMILION MUSCAT FRONTIGNAN
FRENCH SIRAH SAINT MACAIRE MUSCAT PANTELLERIA
GAMAY BEAUJOLAIS TINTA MADEIRA VALDEPENAS
JOHANNISBERG RIESLING TOKAY HERMITAGE NOIR

3. THE EC FINDS THESE VARIETIES OBJECTIONABLE BECAUSE THEY ARE IDENTICAL TO--OR GIVE RISE TO CONFUSION WITH NAME OF EC GEOGRAPHICAL UNITS USED FOR EC WINES VQPRD OR OF OTHER THIRD COUNTRY WINES. HOWEVER,

THE ABLE-MENTIONED GRAPE VARIETIES MAY APPEAR UNTIL AUGUST 31, 1977 ON LABELS OF U.S. WINES IMPORTED INTO ANY MEMBER STATE THAT PERMITS IT. DURING THIS TIME THE EC WOULD HOPE TO WORK OUT WITH THE U.S. AN AGREEMENT ON SYNONYMS U.S. WINE EXPORTERS COULD USE IN LIEU OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED GRAPE VARIETIES. FOR EXAMPLE, DR. REICHARDT INFORMALLY SUGGESTED "CHENIN" TO REPLACE "PINEAU DE LA LOIRE", "MUSCAT" FOR ALL THE USCAT VARIETIES, "GAMAY" INSTEAD OF GAMAY BEAUJOLAIS AND "UGNI BLANC" FOR "SAINT EMILION". HE WILL BE CONTACT US NEXT WEEK TO GIVE US A MORE COMPLETE LIST OF SUGGESTED SYNONYMS. DR. REICHARDT MENTIONED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT MIGHT WANT TO CONTACT A WINE EXPERT LIKE PROFESSOR OLMO

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT DAVIS, TO HELP IN THE EXERCISE OF FINDING SUITABLE SYNONYMS.

4. WHILE DR. REICHARDT CONSIDERS THE U.S. HYBRID VARIETIES NOT UNACCEPTABLE, HE WONDERED WHETHER THEIR APPEARANCE ON THE ACCEPTED EC LIST WOULD AROUSE CONCERN AMONG EC PRODUCERS. COMMISSION OFFICIALS QUESTION HOW MUCH TRADE THERE IS IN WINE LABELLED WITH THESE HYBRID VARIETIES. IF, IN FACT, THERE IS NO TRADE, THE EC WOULD JUST AS SOON PREFER NOT INCLUDING THEM ON THE ACCEPTED LIST. THE COMMISSION WOULD LIKE TO GET SOME INDICATION FROM THE U.S. AS TO WHICH VARIETIES ARE LIKELY OR LESS LIKELY TO APPEAR ON OUR LABELS OF WINE EXPORTED TO THE EC. WE RESPONDED THAT WE WOULD SEND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THIS REQUEST ALONG TO WASHINGTON. COMMISSION OFFICIALS EMPHASIZED THAT IF THE U.S. HAD STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT ANY OF THE HYBRID VARIETIES, THE EC WOULD ACCEPT THEM.

5. THE COMMISSION'S WINE DIVISION ALSO HAD SOME PROBLEMS WITH THE US OF "VELTELINER" A TERM WHICH REFERS TO SEVERAL GENETICALLY DIFFERENT VARIETIES. IF THE U.S. AGREES TO SPECIFY THE COLOR OF THE GRAPE, THE COMMISSION BELIEVES THERE WOULD BE NO DIFFICULTY.

6. THE COMMISSION STILL HAS NO FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE LATEST U.S. INVITATION FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON WINE. THEY EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE GRAPE VARIETY ISSUE COULD BE SETTLED RAPIDLY. TULLY SAID THAT HE CONSIDERED THAT THE SYNONYM PROBLEM COULD RESOLVED OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS. MISSION OFFICER EXPRESSED DOUBTS THAT THIS WOULD BE THE CASE.

7. THE COMMISSION OFFICIALS INFORMED US THAT THE COMMISSION HAS BEEN HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER WINE-SUPPLYING COUNTRIES ON GRAPE VARIETY NAMES, IN PARTICULAR, AUSTRALIA, SOUTH AFRICA AND SWITZERLAND. AS A RESULT OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS, THE COMMISSION HOPES TO COMPLETE WITHIN THE NEXT THREE WEEKS ITS FIRST LIST OF ACCEPTABLE VINE VARIETY NAMES.

8. IN A SEPARATE TELEPHONE CONVERSATION, LOERKE, COMMISSION DESK OFFICER FOR US AFFAIRS, SUGGESTED PRIVATELY THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA FOR THE UNITED STATES TO PROPOSE A DATE FOR CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON IN MARCH SO THAT THE US WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS THE FIRST COMMISSION LIST OF WINE VARIETIES, TO TALK ABOUT OMITTED VARIETIES AND TO SUGGEST ADDITIONS FOR A SUBSEQUENT COMMISSION LIST OF WINE VARIETIES. THE MOMENTUM ON THE VARIETY ISSUE MAKES LOERKE BELIEVE THAT EARLY CONSULTATIONS WOULD BE ESPECIALLY USEFUL. AT THAT TIME THE US AND THE COMMISSION COULD ALSO TAKE OTHER ASPECTS OF THE WINE PROBLEM.

9. RECOMMENDATION: THAT WASHINGTON AUTHORIZE THE MISSION TO PROPOSE DATES IN MARCH FOR A US/EC WINE CONSULTATION IN WASHINGTON. MORRIS

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